9.	183rd	A Continuum on the General Clauses Act, 1897 with Special Reference to the Admissibility and Codification of External Aids to Interpretation of Statutes

Amendment in the Indian Evidence Act

1310. DR. ABRAR AHMED: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to amend the Indian Evidence Act to make it more friendly to women;

(b) if so, the details of the amendments proposed to be incorporated in the Act; and

(c) whether the amendments are based on the recommendations made by the Law Commission and the National Commission for Women?

THE MINISTER OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI K. JANA KRISHNAMURTHY): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) A proviso to section 146 in the Indian Evidence Act, 1872 is proposed to be inserted to the effect that in a prosecution for rape and attempt to commit rape, it shall not be permissible to put questions in the cross-examination of the prosecutrix as to her general immoral character. Further, clause (4) of section 155, which provides that when a man is prosecuted for rape or an attempt to ravish, it may be shown that the prosecutrix was of generally immoral character, is proposed to be omitted.

A Bill on the above lines has already been introduced in the Lok Sabha on 28.11.2002.

(c) Yes Sir.

Decline in the profit of SCI

†1311. SHRI MOTILAL VORA: Will the Minister of SHIPPING be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the gross profit of the Shipping Corporation of India for the year 2001-2002 has decreased steeply as compared to the profit for the year 2000-2001;

(b) if so, whether Government have reviewed it;

(c) if so, the reasons for decline in the profit and the details of the officials responsible for this; and

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(d) the measures taken by Government to maintain the past level of profit in future?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING (SHRI SU. THIRUNA VUKKARASAR): (a) Yes, Sir. Shipping Corporation of India's (SCI) gross profit has fallen for the year 2001-2002 as compared to the year 2000-2001. The profit before interest, depreciation & tax for the two years under consideration are given hereunder:

	(Rs. in crore)
Financial Year 2000-01	Rs. 893.9
Financial Year 2001-02	Rs. 667.1

(b) to (d) Shipping is a cyclical business and the main reason for decline in profitability of SCI during financial year 2001-2002 compared to financial year 2000-2001 was a fall in the freight rates in the international market. SCI runs its business on commercial basis and takes commercial decisions, which are best suited as per the market situation. Business operations and profitability are directly related to fluctuations in freight rates.

Navigable Depth in Kolkata and Haldia Ports

1312. SHRI DIPANKAR MUKHERJEE: Will the Minister of SHIPPING be pleased to refer to anser to Unstarred Question 2231 given in the Rajya Sabha on 10th December, 2001 and state:

(a) the status of the approved proposal for improvement of draft in Hooghly Estuary;

(b) whether the project will be completed by May, 2003, as stated; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor and the expected date of completion of the project?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING (SHRI SU. THIRUNAVUKKARASAR): (a) to (c) For improvement of draught in Hooghly estuary, Government has approved a proposal for execution of River Regulatory Measures at an estimated cost of Rs. 350.84 crores. The various components of the project include:

(i) Capital Dredging over Jiggerkhali Flat including construction of Dyke	Rs. 263.83 crores.
(ii) Trimming of the western face of Nayachara Island	Rs. 26.53 crores
(iii) Construction of a guide wall at the southern end of Nayachara Island	Rs. 41.10 crores